

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 1991 -- FIFTH ORGANIZATIONAL DAY

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 1991

IN JOINT CONVENTION

TO INAUGURATE THE GOVERNOR

The hour having arrived, set by Senate Joint Resolution No. 25, the Senate met with the House in Joint Convention for the purpose of inaugurating the Honorable Ned McWherter as Governor.

The Joint Convention was called to order by Mr. Speaker Wilder, President of the Joint Convention.

On motion of Senator Darnell, the roll call of the Senate was dispensed with.

On motion on Representative Purcell, the roll call of the House was dispensed with.

Thereupon, the Chief Clerk of the Senate read Senate Joint Resolution No. 25 authorizing the Joint Convention.

Mr. President Wilder appointed a Select Committee composed of Senators Atchley, Crutchfield, Darnell, Harper, Patten and Springer; and Representatives Bragg, DeBerry, Herron, Rhinehart, Ridgeway and Robinson (Davidson) as the committee to escort Governor Ned McWherter to the Speaker's podium. Senator Darnell will serve as Chair of this committee.

Without objection, the Joint Convention recessed pending the arrival of the Honorable Ned McWherter.

The Joint Convention was called to order by Mr. President Wilder.

Without objection, the roll calls of the Senate and House were dispensed with.

Senator Darnell announced that the Honorable Ned McWherter was ready to be escorted to the podium.

President Wilder asked the Committee to Escort the Honorable Ned McWherter to please come forward.

The invocation was given by Dr. Claude Gardner, Chancellor of Freed-Hardeman College of Henderson, Tennessee.

The Presentation of Colors was by the Tennessee National Guard.

The National Anthem was sung by Mr. George Bitzas of Knoxville, Tennessee, accompanied by the University of Tennessee "Pride of Southland Band" under the direction of Dr. J. Julian.

President Wilder introduced the Honorable Ned McWherter.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 1991 -- FIFTH ORGANIZATIONAL DAY

**INAUGURAL ADDRESS
NED R. MCWHERTER
January 19, 1991**

Governor Wilder, Speaker Naifeh, members of the General Assembly, members of the Supreme Court, constitutional officers and members of the Congressional delegation. To our special guests, the families of those who have been called to serve our country. Fellow Tennesseans.

For the trust and confidence you have bestowed upon me, I thank you from the heart.

Four years ago, we gathered on this plaza to give expression to our hopes for Tennessee. Most of those who stood with me on that cold afternoon, and the majority of Tennesseans who last November affirmed their support for this Administration, were working men and women whose lives do not afford time for the details of public policy.

They are the millions of Tennesseans who get up every morning, get their children ready for school, and go off to work. Young and old, they are far more concerned about paying the monthly bills than they are with partisan politics.

For these Tennesseans, my first priority has been to provide a government as hard-working and realistic as they are.

We are the first Administration in memory to reduce its size while expanding services. With the help of the leadership in the House and Senate, we have avoided the financial crisis found in state capitols throughout the country.

Our budget has been, and will continue to be, balanced. When our revenues ran short, we did what millions of Tennesseans do every month, we cut back.

If I succeed in no other endeavor as your Governor, I will pass to our children a government that is looked upon with respect in the financial markets of the world and in the households of Tennessee.

In the four years since we last stood on this plaza, I have also tried to speak to those Tennesseans who wonder if their taxes are justified. The citizens who seek not just new programs, but more tangible results from the programs we already have.

To open more of our communities to new jobs, we have implemented the largest road and bridge construction program in Tennessee's history.

To provide for the safety of our neighborhoods, we have opened three new prisons and have three more under construction.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 1991 -- FIFTH ORGANIZATIONAL DAY

For our young people in state custody, we have closed a dilapidated institution, and replaced it with two new facilities.

For young couples seeking the dream of owning a house, we have financed a record number of new homes.

For those without access to health insurance, we have made health care available to a quarter of a million additional Tennesseans.

In our literacy program, our drug program, and a hundred other programs for which our government is responsible, the instructions to my Cabinet have been simple. If we can free ourselves from the sound of publicity and false praise, it is possible to hear in quiet voices the basic things Tennesseans really want from their government.

They are asking for a government that is honest. On that principle, this Administration has made no compromise.

They are asking for a government that is fair. In every major initiative, we are bound to a pledge that no group or region will be favored, and none will be forgotten.

Finally, the people of Tennessee are asking for a government that is responsible.

Amid the clamor of the recent campaigns, some have suggested Tennesseans will turn their backs on any request to raise additional revenues. They have, I believe, addressed the wrong question.

I am convinced that Tennesseans will discuss this issue when, and only when, they are satisfied that government has done all it can to get its house in order.

That is why, despite substantial advice and criticism to the contrary, this Administration did not seek a General Fund tax increase during the last four years. We chose to operate within our means in order to restore public confidence in government's ability to address its problems responsibly without spending itself into bankruptcy.

These difficult decisions were not made without sacrifice. They were made knowing that the four years of our first Administration were a preface to my remarks today.

We parted four years ago with the belief that in Tennessee our best is yet to come. I return today to reaffirm that belief.

From the record levels of new investment and new jobs, it is evident businesses from around the nation and around the world share our confidence in Tennessee's future. They are coming to Tennessee because their confidence is founded in things that transcend financial considerations.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 1991 -- FIFTH ORGANIZATIONAL DAY

They come because they see in our government and in our people a Tennessee prepared to make history, rather than merely respond to history. A state secure in its values that knows who we are and where we want to go.

In 1996, Tennessee will host its bicentennial celebration. From across Tennessee, we will come to rededicate ourselves to the cause that has given us purpose for two centuries. By the time we gather, we will know whether we have done what is needed to sustain the dream for the next 100 years.

For the last twelve months, in hundreds of meetings across this great state, I have done my best to explain the challenge that will define our future.

The economic growth we have enjoyed, and the blessings this growth has brought to Tennessee, will be denied to our children unless we make substantial changes in our system of education.

The vast majority of our schools are places where the teachers work hard and do the best they can with the resources they have. But it is shortsighted to believe we can train our young people for a 21st Century economy in schools designed for a time and place that no longer exist.

The issue is far broader than a simple desire to secure more funds for education.

It involves fundamental changes in how we teach and what we expect our students to learn.

It means restructuring our schools to adapt to the skills needed in an economy of increasing technology.

Our task will require a historic shift in decision-making from the State Capitol to local communities.

And it will demand, without question, a degree of accountability unprecedented in the history of public education.

Were not the stakes so high, I would not engage the struggle to transform our education system. I first came to this government twenty-two years ago, and looked at Tennessee's future through the eyes of a young man.

I am now in the autumn of my life. For the first time, I am free from the considerations that can burden the decisions of younger men and women.

Before this General Assembly, and before the people of Tennessee, I today commit the remainder of my public service to the goal of providing a 21st Century classroom for the young people of Tennessee.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 1991 -- FIFTH ORGANIZATIONAL DAY

I will take the leadership role in seeking a totally new education system, with increased standards for students, teachers and administrators.

I will take the leadership role in seeking the revenues necessary to make sure that the chance for a good education is not determined by a child's place of birth.

And with deference to the advice and consent of the Legislature, I will do all within my power to ensure that if we raise revenues, we do so in a way that is fair to the working men and women we represent.

I close with the request that you take with you a single thought.

Through the ages, the history of governments is marked by how their leaders responded in times of threat to freedom and prosperity. On the other side of the world, thousands of Tennesseans stand in the shadow of death to defend the dream that has guided us for two centuries.

Long after we are gone, our children will read of these times and the decisions that confront us.

My lasting hope is that when they read of those brave Tennesseans who defended the dream abroad, they will also note those back home who had the courage and the vision to keep the dream alive.

Thank you, and may God watch over you and your families.

PRESENTATION

Mr. President Wilder introduced Bret and Matt Ramsey, grandchildren of the Honorable Ned McWherter, who presented him with a Bible on which to take the Oath of Office of Governor.

Mr. President Wilder introduced the Honorable Lyle Reid, Chief Justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court, for the purpose of administering the Oath of Office to the Governor.

OATH OF OFFICE

The Honorable Lyle Reid, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, administered the Oath of Office to Governor Ned McWherter, as prescribed by law.

Governor Ned McWherter and Chief Justice Lyle Reid signed the Oath of Office.

Thereupon, Mr. President Wilder declared that the Honorable Ned McWherter was duly, legally and constitutionally inaugurated the Governor of the State of Tennessee for the ensuing four years.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 1991 -- FIFTH ORGANIZATIONAL DAY

The Tennessee National Guard gave the Governor's Salute to Governor McWherter.

The benediction was given by Captain Samuel S. Hook, Chaplain of the Tennessee National Guard.

Mr. President Wilder relinquished the gavel to Mr. Speaker Naifeh as President of the Joint Convention.

The purpose for which the Joint Convention was assembled having been accomplished, Mr. President Naifeh declared the Joint Convention dissolved.